



# rEAP the Benefits

State Employee Assistance Program 1-877-237-8574

## EAP Awareness Month

**T**he Employee Assistance Program is sponsoring a number of events aimed at educating employees about its services during March EAP Awareness Month. A seminar, "Recognizing the Positives—Catching Others at Their Best" will be presented in over 45 locations across the state. An EAP "Tell Your Story" contest will be open to all employees for participation. Persons are asked to write an account of a positive experience as a giver or recipient of a valuable service at work or in the community. An award will be given to the winning entry. Contest rules may be obtained from each agency/departamental EAP Awareness Month representative. The deadline for entries is March 31. Entries should be mailed or faxed to the State EAP office. The address is WRS Tennessee Tower, 13th Floor, 312 Eighth Avenue North, Nashville, TN 37243. The fax number is 615-741-8196. For further information regarding March EAP Awareness Month activities, call 615-741-1925 or 1-800-253-9981.

## Count Carbs on the Web

**A**re you "low carbing" to lose weight? If so, you don't have to wonder how many grams of carbohydrates are in your food anymore. A free web resource, [www.carbohydrate-counter.org](http://www.carbohydrate-counter.org), helps dieters find the carbohydrate content in thousands of foods — even by brand name! Use it to pick low-carb foods for a low-carbohydrate diet. It also is useful for diabetics who need to watch carbohydrate levels. (Before dieting, always consult your doctor.)

## "Brand" Yourself

**C**ompanies brand their products with attributes like quality, service, safety, security, and dependability. You can do the same with your reputation. Think of coworkers you know who are regarded highly for returning calls promptly, finishing work early, remaining calm in a crisis, or always having a smile for those they meet. They've been branded. What positive features or characteristics of your work style do you want others to think of when your name comes to mind? Take advantage of the natural way all of us process and sort information and make it work for you. Think of yourself as a branded product, decide what sets you apart from others, and make whatever you do carry that unique and special attribute others will soon remember.

## Your Locus Determines Your Focus

**D**o you believe that your life is the result of decisions you have made, and that almost nothing has happened to you by chance? Or do you believe that outside influences have determined your fate? This is called one's "locus of control." Locus of control is learned when growing up, and serves as a starting point in our struggle to solve tough life problems. Although most of us have a balance between these two views, examining one's locus of control and making a shift toward one view over the other can often help you quickly spot tough solutions to difficult problems. Still stumped? Ask the EAP!



Important Notice: Information in this newsletter is for general information purposes only and is not intended to replace the counsel or advice of a qualified health professional. For further questions or help with specific problems or personal concerns, contact your employee assistance professional.

## Play More, Live Longer

If you are working and postponing recreation and leisure activities until you can retire, consider fitting in some of these activities now. It might help you live longer and improve your mental health. A recent study of 107 sets of senior twins has shown that those who participated in leisure activities in early and middle adulthood had a reduced risk of Alzheimer's disease. In the study, risk was reduced regardless of education level or degree of physical exercise. Another earlier study by the Harvard School of Public Health in 1999 showed that seniors who had an active social life lived longer.

**What it means:** Social and leisure activities may be as important to long-term physical and mental health as physical exercise!

*Source: Journal of Gerontology Series, Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences B: 58: P. 249-255*

### Employees Ask About EAP

## EAP Referral Always A Good Thing



**Q** My daycare provider comes to my house late so I can't leave for work on time. My supervisor has known this for two years. Today, he referred me to the EAP after we argued about my coming to work late. Is the referral retaliation?

**A** Although the referral followed your argument, it can't be retaliation. There is nothing revengeful or punitive about an EAP referral. In fact it is the opposite — a supportive attempt to help you and possibly avoid an adverse action to stop your tardiness. Apparently your supervisor has tried to be lenient with your situation, but can't continue. You naturally feel upset after such a long period of accommodation. The EAP can help you examine possible strategies for resolving the daycare issue and your arrival time.

## Are You Young and Reckless

As a younger worker, you are 80 percent more likely to be injured on the job, and that injury is more likely to come in the first six months of your employment. That's a key message in the latest report from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. Many developmental factors contribute to the risk young workers face. How to reduce your risk:

- Deal effectively with personal issues and conflicts in your life that can distract you on the job and increase risk of injury — home and parent issues, socializing, that new car, etc. Remember the EAP as a source of help for confidential problem solving.
- Use safety equipment and avoid shortcuts. Young workers have a natural sense of invincibility. This is normal, but you can be led to believe that you are not likely to get killed or injured. The opposite is true.
- Whenever available, participate in company training on using equipment or machinery. Don't miss training and safety workshops. Inexperience and lack of training equal increased risk.
- Don't shy away from asking questions about safety issues. The younger you are, the harder it is to be assertive and ask for the proper safety equipment to perform a task.
- If in doubt about how to perform a task or how to handle a piece of equipment, ask. Unwillingness to ask questions can place you at risk of injury.

## Employees Sweet on Smucker

A 26-year veteran used his own money to build a monument of thanks to J.M. Smucker Company. The company of jam and jelly fame (and 115 other products) is No. 1 on Fortune magazine's list of the best companies to work for this year.

The untold story about Smucker is that employees have successfully adopted management's philosophy for how to treat their coworkers: Listen with your full attention, look for the good in others, have a sense of humor, and say thank you for a job well done. The result — a company with exceptionally high morale.